

COOKING CLASSES
AT SUR LA TABLE

SUSHI BASICS

WITH SUR LA TABLE CHEF

Ingredient Shopping List

Below is a list of ingredients you'll need to make the recipes in this packet. Please reach out for substitution suggestions.

Proteins

- 6 ounces surimi or lump crab meat

Produce

- 1 English cucumber
- 2 medium avocados
- 1 large carrot
- Small bunch of green onions
- 1 red bell pepper

Specialty items

- Rice vinegar
- Nori
- Sushi rice
- Wasabi paste
- Pickled ginger
- Soy sauce
- 1 piece of Kombu
- 1 tablespoon sake

Pantry items

- Granulated sugar
- Kosher salt

Equipment Needed

Below is a list of tools you'll need to make the recipes in this packet.

Cutlery

- Chef's knife

Hand Tools/Gadgets

- Cutting board
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Liquid measuring cup
- Mixing bowls (various sizes)
- Bamboo mat
- Fine-mesh strainer
- Rice paddle or a large flat spoon

Cookware

- Medium saucepan with a lid or a rice cooker
- Small saucepan

Other

- Plastic wrap
- Small piece of cardboard or a paper fan
- Kitchen towel

Pre-Class Mise en Place and Notes

- Please gather all ingredients prior to class if you will be cooking along.
- It is helpful to organize the ingredients by recipe on rimmed baking sheets.
- Feel free to pre-measure ingredients, but it is not necessary.
- We encourage you to prep all your ingredients before class as it will allow you to have more time to listen and watch the instructor.

All Recipes

1. Wash and dry all the produce.

CALIFORNIA ROLLS

Yield: 6 sushi rolls, about 36 pieces

If you prefer, replace surimi (Japanese imitation crab meat) with lump crab meat. Serve the rolls with pickled ginger.

Hand vinegar:

1 cup of water

1/4 cup unseasoned rice vinegar

Sushi fillings:

3 sheets nori

1 recipe Sushi Rice (recipe included)

1 teaspoon wasabi paste, or to taste

1/2 English cucumber, peeled and cut into 3-inch long matchsticks

1 medium avocado, peeled, seeded, and cut lengthwise into 1/4-inch thick strips

6 ounces surimi or lump crab meat, shredded

For serving:

Pickled ginger

Wasabi

Soy sauce

1. **To prepare the hand vinegar:** Combine the water and rice vinegar in a small mixing bowl and set aside.
2. **To roll the sushi:** Place a bamboo mat wrapped in plastic wrap, with the slots crosswise, on a work surface. Have the wasabi nearby.
3. Place the wrapped bamboo mat on a clean work surface so that the mat rolls away from you. Fold a piece of nori in half across the grain and pinch along the folded edge to break in two. Place a half piece of nori on top of your bamboo mat, dull side up with a long edge closest to you.
4. Moisten your hands with the hand vinegar to prevent the rice from sticking to your hands and pick up a small handful of the sushi rice, about 1/4 cup. Using your fingertips, gently spread the rice evenly to cover the nori, leaving about a 1/2-inch margin of nori uncovered at the top of the sheet. Add small amounts of rice as needed to cover the nori with a 1/4-inch thick coating of rice.
5. Place a strip or 2 of cucumber and avocado end to end lengthwise across the center of the rice. Place about 1 ounce of shredded surimi on top. Keeping the fillings in place, pick up the edge of the mat nearest to you with your thumbs and slowly lift the rice-covered nori around

the fillings, pressing gently against the mat to make a nori roll filled with rice, with the fillings in the center. Let the roll stand in the mat briefly so the rice can set. Then fold down the mat and roll the extra margin of seaweed so that it overlaps the roll, to form a tube of rice-filled nori. Gently transfer the sushi roll to the cutting board, seam side down, and cover tightly with plastic wrap to keep moist. Repeat with the remaining nori, rice, and filling ingredients.

6. **To serve:** Using a very sharp slicing knife, moisten the blade with water, wipe to remove the excess, and, starting in the middle of the roll, cut into 6 or 8 equal pieces. Moisten and wipe the knife blade with a clean, damp towel between each cut. Arrange the slices, cut side up, on a platter, and serve with small bowls of pickled ginger, wasabi, and soy sauce.

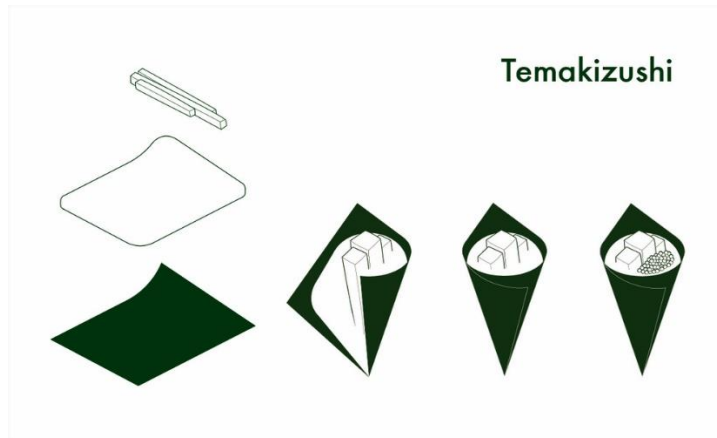
Recipe variations:

- Substitute surimi for slices sushi-grade tuna or previously frozen sushi-grade salmon.

VEGETABLE HAND ROLLS

Yield: 8 hand rolls

To make Temaki or hand rolls, nori is wrapped around rice and fillings to form a shape similar to an ice cream cone.



Hand vinegar:

1 cup of water

1/4 cup unseasoned rice vinegar

Sushi filling:

4 sheets nori

1 recipe Sushi Rice (recipe included)

1 large carrot, peeled and cut into 3-inch long matchsticks

1/2 English cucumber, peeled and cut into 3 inch long matchsticks

1 Haas avocado, peeled, seeded and cut lengthwise into 8 (1/4-inch thick) strips

3 green onions, white and tender green parts only, cut into 3-inch long threads, soaked in ice water to curl

For serving:

Pickled ginger

Wasabi

Soy sauce

Cucumber pine branches, for garnish

1/2 bell pepper cut into brunoise, for garnish

1. **To prepare the hand vinegar:** Combine the water and rice vinegar in a small mixing bowl and set aside.

2. Pick up a half sheet of nori and, holding it shiny side down in the palm of your left hand dampen your right hand in the hand vinegar, scoop up a scant 1/4 cup of the rice, and gently

form it into an oval and gently press the rice onto the nori, leaving a half-inch border above and below the rice. Use your index finger to press a vertical channel into the rice to hold the fillings. Lay 2 to 3 carrot matchsticks, 1 to 2 avocado strips, and 3 to 4 green onion strips in the channel.

3. **To form the hand roll:** Fold the bottom left corner of the nori with your right hand and snugly wrapping it around the rice and fillings while turning the hand roll to the right. Continue wrapping and turning the roll to form an ice cream cone shape. Seal the upper right corner of the nori with a bit of sushi rice. Place the hand roll on a platter seam side down and continue with the remaining ingredients. Serve hand rolls with pickled ginger, wasabi, and soy sauce as condiments.

4. **To cut the cucumber garnish:** Cut a 3-inch long piece of cucumber in half and cut off the skin on the sides. Make a series of lengthwise cuts about 1/8-inch apart, leaving a 1/2-inch base at the end.

5. Slice the piece of cucumber in half lengthwise. Carefully fold in each of the cut strips of cucumber, tucking each one into the gap between itself and the next strip. Leave the last strip of cucumber unfolded.

Recipe variations:

- Hand rolls can hold diced sushi-grade tuna, previously frozen sushi-grade salmon or, any of your favorite sushi-grade fish.

SUSHI RICE

Yield: 4 cups cooked rice

Not all types of sushi include nori, but nearly every kind includes seasoned rice, the preparation of which is a time-honored Japanese ritual. First, the rice is rinsed several times in cold water to remove the excess starch before cooking. Next, the rice is cooked and transferred to a handai, a shallow wooden bowl (the wood absorbs moisture from the hot rice). Finally, one hand is used to fold the seasoned vinegar syrup into the rice with a rice paddle, while the other hand cools the rice as quickly as possible with a paper fan. The syrup is slowly folded, never stirred, which would make the rice too sticky.

Rice:

2 cups Japanese short-grain rice
2 cups water, plus extra for rinsing

Syrup:

1/4 cup rice vinegar
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 teaspoons sea salt
1 postcard-size piece of Kombu
1 tablespoon sake

1. **To prepare the rice:** Place rice in a large bowl and add cold water to cover. Gently stir the rice with your fingertips and then drain in a strainer placed over a sink. Return the rice to the bowl, add fresh water to cover, stir and drain again. Repeat this step several more times until the water runs clear.
2. Transfer the rinsed rice to a 6-quart saucepan and add the water. Set the pot over high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover and cook until all of the water has been absorbed and the surface of the rice is dimpled, about 10 to 14 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat and let stand, covered, for 5 minutes.
3. Alternatively, you can prepare the sushi rice in a rice cooker. Place the rinsed rice in the cooker and follow the manufacturers' instructions for sushi rice. The rice cooker will automatically shut off when all the water is absorbed. Let the rice stand, covered, for 5 minutes.
4. **To prepare the vinegar rice syrup:** In a small saucepan set over low heat, combine the vinegar with the sugar, salt and kombu and simmer until the sugar and salt dissolve and the kombu has softened, about 5 minutes; remove from heat and stir in the sake. Set aside to cool and discard kombu before using syrup.

5. ***To finish the sushi rice:*** Rinse a rice paddle or other large, flat spoon with cold water and use it to transfer the cooked hot rice to a large, shallow bowl or platter, preferably wood. Rinse the spoon again to keep the rice from sticking to it, and then gently spread the rice out evenly in the bowl. Slowly add the syrup and fold in using a slicing motion to coat the grains of rice and keep the grains separate. As you fold, use your other hand to fan the rice with a paper fan or a square of stiff cardboard. Continue to fold the syrup into the rice, until the rice becomes glossy and has cooled to room temperature.

5. Cover the rice with a clean kitchen towel and let stand at room temperature for 5 minutes, or until ready to make the sushi rolls. Do not use plastic wrap or foil because you don't want any condensation to form, and don't refrigerate the rice, or it will harden. Rice can stand at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours.

THE INGREDIENTS

Japanese-style rice: Japanese short-grain rice is the most essential ingredient in sushi making. High in starch, this short-grain rice gives sushi its characteristic stickiness when cooked (also makes it easier to eat with chopsticks). Sushi rice, like all grains, should be stored on a cool dark shelf in an airtight container.

Kombu: A type of kelp. This edible sea vegetable is one of the main ingredients in making dashi, the stock that is used throughout Japanese cuisine. The kelp is harvested from the cold water of Hokkaidō, Japan, and dried and sold in sheets at most Asian markets. The characteristic chalky appearance against the black-green sheets is a naturally occurring glutamic amino acid, a powerhouse of the flavor-enhancing taste umami.

Nori: Dried sheets of seaweed, nori is made by shredding edible seaweed, pressing it into thin sheets (much like the process for making paper) and drying, sold either plain or toasted. Nori is used to wrap sushi rolls, and it can also be shredded and served atop rice as a condiment. Make sure to keep nori dry and sealed until ready to use. To toast the nori, pass each sheet over a medium-high flame or electric stove burner for 1 to 2 seconds.

Pickled ginger (Gari): Usually served beside sushi, pickled ginger is meant to be eaten by the slice in between eating different types of sushi to cleanse the palate and aid in digestion.

Red pickled ginger (Beni shoga): Not to be confused with gari, the pink pickled ginger served beside sushi. Beni shoga is a deep dark red which comes from the red perilla (shiso) plant and is served in many Japanese dishes.

Rice vinegar: Japanese rice vinegar has a pale golden color and a mild tart flavor. Traditionally brewed from sake lees (the sediment left over from the sake making process), this vinegar has a subtle sweetness that allows the flavor of the rice to shine through. There are two types of rice vinegar: seasoned or unseasoned. Seasoned rice vinegar has added sugar and salt, often used in dipping sauce or for vinaigrettes. We use unseasoned rice vinegar in making sushi to control the seasoning of our syrup.

Sake: Distilled from polished and steamed rice grains, sake is an alcoholic beverage. When used in making sushi syrup, sake balances and enhances the flavors of sweet, sour and salty. It is also served both hot and cold to accompany sushi meals. Store sake tightly capped on a cool dark shelf. For sushi-making purposes, buy an inexpensive sake.

Soy sauce: The main and most important seasoning in Japanese cuisine. Soy sauce is brewed from fermented soybeans, wheat, water and salt. It is used both as an ingredient and a dipping sauce for sushi. Tamari is a wheat-free and fragrant alternative to soy sauce.

Wasabi: Wasabi is a rhizome native to Japan. Genuine wasabi is expensive and rarely seen on restaurant menus in the United States. If you happen to come across it in a high-end sushi restaurant, you're in for a treat; delicate and floral are words to describe the flavor of freshly grated real wasabi. Most wasabi found in Western markets is actually green-dyed mustard and

horseradish powder. To make wasabi from powder, make a stiff paste by mixing equal parts powder to water and let the mixture stand for 10 minutes to develop its flavor. Spicy, hot and pungent are just a few words to describe how powerful wasabi can be. Just a little is needed to smear in between fish and sushi rice. It is meant to enhance sushi and complement the ingredients, not overpower them.

TYPES OF SUSHI

Nigirizushi is an oblong mound of sushi rice that is pressed into the palm of the hand with a small dab of wasabi smeared on top and draped with a single topping. This sushi is meant to be eaten with your fingers. Place one piece of nigiri between your thumb and forefingers, turn it upside down, and dip the fish in the soy sauce. It is done this way because dipping it rice-side first will cause it to fall apart.

Makizushi is cylinder-shaped sushi rolls formed with the help of a bamboo mat, called a makisu.

Futomaki is a wide cylinder shaped roll-formed with nori on the outside. Typical futomaki is about 2 to 2.5 inches in diameter. They are often made with two or three fillings that are chosen for their complementary flavors and colors.

Hosomaki is a thin cylinder-shaped roll with the nori on the outside. A typical hosomaki has a diameter of about 1 inch. It generally contains only one filling, often tuna, cucumber, kanpyō (sweet, stewed Japanese gourd), thinly sliced carrots, or avocado.

Kappamaki is a variety of hosomaki filled with cucumber. Kappamaki is named after the Japanese legendary water imp fond of cucumbers called the kappa. Traditionally it is eaten to clean the palate between eating raw fish and other kinds of foods so that the flavors of the fish are distinct from the tastes of other foods.

Temaki, also called a hand roll, is a cone-shaped piece with nori on the outside and sushi rice with ingredients on the inside. Eat with your fingers.

Uramaki is a medium-size cylinder shaped roll with two or more fillings. Uramaki differs from other makizushi because the rice is on the outside and the nori inside. The filling is in the center surrounded by nori, then a layer of rice, and an outer coating of other ingredients such as tobiko (flying fish roe) or toasted sesame seeds.

GETTING STARTED

Bamboo rolling mat: Essential for making any type of rolled sushi. The mat is made of bamboo sticks woven together with cotton string. A trick to keeping your mat clean is to wrap it completely in plastic wrap; once you're done rolling simply remove and discard the plastic.

Sushi rice: Sushi rice is typically made from short-grain white rice, but brown rice will also work. Look for brands such as Calrose or Nishiki in the Asian sections of most grocery stores. The preparation of sushi rice is a time-honored Japanese ritual. First, the rice is rinsed several times in cold water to remove the excess starch before cooking. Next, the rice is cooked and transferred to a *handai*, or shallow wooden bowl (the wood absorbs moisture from the hot rice). Using a bamboo rice paddle, the seasoned vinegar syrup is folded into the rice while the rice is cooled as quickly as possible with a paper fan. The vinegar is slowly folded into the rice, never stirred, as stirring would break up the rice grains and make the rice too sticky. Cool the sushi rice to room temperature before using it.

Hand vinegar (Tezu): Used to prevent the sushi rice from sticking to your hands while you make sushi rolls. To make hand vinegar, mix together 1 cup water with 1/4 cup unseasoned rice vinegar. Keep your fingers moistened with the hand vinegar while you form the sushi rolls.

Prepare Your Fillings of Choice: The best part about making sushi at home is filling your rolls with the ingredients you like best! Make sure to slice ingredients like carrots, cucumbers and green onions into thin matchsticks 2 to 3 inches long. Look for ingredients in Asian markets or large grocery stores or be creative and make your own filling combinations. Keep the stacks of nori dry; if they get soggy it will make rolling impossible.